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FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN:
IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTION
IN THE CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

Revised draft agreed conclusions submitted by the Vice-Chairperson of the Commission, Ms. Eva Hildrum (Norway), on the critical area of concern: women and the economy

Governments, international organizations and the private sector should recognize the contributions women make to economic growth through their paid and unpaid work as employers, employees and entrepreneurs. They should adopt the following:

1. Governments, international organizations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, employers' organizations and labour unions, [and civil society] should adopt a systematic and [integrated] [multifaceted] approach to accelerating women's full participation in economic decision-making at all levels [, by enhancing their capacity to influence and make economic decisions as producers, consumers, paid workers, household managers, members of non-governmental organizations and unions, managers, employers and elected officials] [at the national and international levels] and ensure the mainstreaming of a gender perspective at all levels [of implementation of economic development policies and programmes with a view to eradicating poverty]. [To this end, Governments are encouraged to conduct gender analyses of policies and programmes that incorporate information on the full range of women's and men's paid and unpaid economic activity. Governments, international organizations - particularly the International Labour Organization, the private sector and non-governmental organizations should develop and share case studies and best practices of gender analysis in policy areas that affect the economic situation of women.]

2. [As a prerequisite to women's economic advancement, Governments, international organizations, the private sector and civil society should mobilize resources, including new and additional resources, to developing countries from all available mechanisms - i.e., multilateral, bilateral and private sources.]

3. Governments should promote and support the elimination of biases in the educational system so as to counteract the gender segregation of the labour market, enhance the employability of women and effectively improve women's skills, in particular in science, new technologies and other potential and innovative areas of expansion in terms of employment [*placement in text to be decided:* and take steps to broaden women's access to career choices and fields of study, in, inter alia, technological and other growth areas].

4. [Economic policies and structural adjustment policies, including liberalization policies, with inputs from the women most affected by them, should be formulated and monitored in a gender-sensitive way in order to generate positive results for women and men, drawing on research on the gender impact of macro and microeconomic policies. Governments should ensure, inter alia, that macroeconomic policies, including financial and public-sector reforms and employment generation, are gender-sensitive and friendly to small-scale and medium-sized enterprises. Local-level regulations and administrative arrangements should be conducive to women entrepreneurs. It is the responsibility of Governments to ensure that women are not discriminated against in times of structural change and economic recession.]

5. Governments should ensure that women's rights, particularly those of rural women and women living in poverty, are promoted and implemented through their equal access to economic resources, including land, property rights, [inheritance rights/right to inheritance], credit and traditional savings schemes, such as women's banks and cooperatives.

6. [The international community should actively support national efforts for the promotion of micro-credit schemes that ensure for women access to credit, self employment and integration into the economy.]

7. [Micro-credit schemes should be supported and monitored in order to evaluate their efficiency in terms of their impact on increasing and sustaining women's productivity, income-earning capacity, and economic empowerment and well-being.]

8. Those sectors of government, the private sector and civil society which provide training services should focus on institutional capacity-building, consciousness-raising and improving and upgrading technical skills, including business and management skills and the use of new technologies. Local and traditional technologies and products based on women's knowledge should also be supported and promoted.

9. It is important for Governments, financial institutions, non-governmental organizations, civil society, women's organizations and other relevant actors to promote women's entrepreneurial and self-employed activities through technical assistance services or programmes; information on markets; training; the

creation of networks, including those at the regional and international levels; and adequate financial support; and where appropriate, by developing incentives. In order to strengthen the link between sustainable development and poverty eradication, such encouragement and support should extend to businesses owned by women in environmental, resource-based, and export-oriented industries as a link between sustainable development and poverty eradication.

10. To secure a critical mass of women's participation in top decision-making positions [, including the introduction of affirmative action,] Governments should implement and monitor anti-discriminatory laws. The public administration and the private sector should comply with those laws and introduce changes to corporate structures. [Positive action] can be an effective policy instrument for improving the position of women in sectors and levels of the economy where they are underrepresented. Governments should stimulate employers to introduce objective and transparent procedures for recruitment, gender-sensitive career planning, and monitoring and accountability systems.

11. Social partners, including labour unions, employers' organizations and non-governmental organizations, should consider monitoring and publicizing enterprises and organizations that take initiatives for the advancement of women and publicizing information on the companies that violate anti-discrimination laws.

12. [Governments should intensify their efforts to implement the actions identified in the Beijing Platform for Action for the elimination of occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination. In that regard, the security of women's employment and the conditions for their reintegration into the labour market need to be the subject of special attention. Due consideration should also be given to women in the informal sector and atypical jobs.]

13. [Governments, labour unions and the private sector should develop and use analytical tools to compare wages in female and male-dominated occupations, including measures and tools better to reflect the real value of the skills, knowledge and experience women bring to the family and to wage-paying work and the full range of the requirements and conditions of wage-paying work, with the aim of achieving equal pay for work of equal value, with particular focus on minimum wages and low-wage industries.] [Gender-sensitive monitoring is crucial in enforcing the principle of equal pay for work of equal value. Comprehensive policy-making in this field should include:

(a) Use of analytical tools;

(b) Effective legislation;

(c) Transparency of women's and men's wages;

(d) Changing the gender-based division of labour and the stereotyped choices of men and women;

(e) Effective guidance for employers.]

14. [Governments are encouraged to develop strategies to increase the well-being of low-paid workers, including targeted enforcement of existing laws in those industries where the most vulnerable workers, predominantly women, are found.]

15. Governments should [take or encourage] measures [including formulating, promoting and implementing] [legal and administrative] to facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life, such as child and dependent care, parental leave and flexible working schemes for men and women [and shorter working hours/time]. Full integration of women into the formal economy and, in particular, into economic decision-making means changing the current gender-based division of labour into new economic structures where women and men enjoy equal treatment, pay and power. To that end, better sharing of paid and unpaid work between women and men is required.

16. Governments should consider ratifying the new International Labour Organization Convention on home-based workers.

17. Governments and employers should ensure the protection of the rights of migrant women workers by creating better educational and employment opportunities, preventing and combating trafficking in women and children, and eliminating discrimination against women in the labour market.

18. Governments should monitor and enforce equal opportunity policies and labour laws pertaining to the practices of all of the national and transnational corporations operating in their countries.

19. Women should identify and support women-friendly corporations and socially responsible businesses through investments and use of their services or products.

20. Unpaid work in the household, in agriculture, food production, volunteer work, family businesses, and natural resource management should be measured and valued, using improved methods, including regular time-use studies, and its value accurately reflected in satellite or other official accounts, which are separate from, but consistent with, core national accounts, and international organizations and research institutions should provide technical assistance to developing countries, [particularly countries in Africa, the least developed countries and the economies in transition] in valuing and making visible women's unpaid work.

21. [The international community, including international financial institutions, is urged to develop effective, equitable, development-oriented and durable solutions to the external debt and debt-service problems of the developing countries, so as to enable them to contribute substantially to the strengthening of the global economy and to achieve sustainable economic growth and sustainable development.]

22. [Better coordination and dialogue, at all levels, between the Bretton Woods institutions and the United Nations and between the United Nations system and the World Trade Organization is necessary in order for their policies and programmes to support gender equality.] [The United Nations and its funds,

programmes and specialized agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization should improve coordination and dialogue at all levels, including the field level, in order to ensure the effectiveness of their programmes and policies to support gender equality.]

23. Development policies should focus on the economic empowerment of women. The interlinkage between national policies at the macro level and economic and social gender roles and relations at the micro level should be clear, in order to make the policies more effective. [The impact of liberalization policies on women should be assessed.]

24. Governments should commit themselves to the goal of gender balance, with special emphasis on reaching a critical mass of women as soon as possible, when nominating representatives to governing bodies of the United Nations system dealing with policy-making in the areas of finance, economic development, trade and commerce (for example, the Fifth Committee, Second Committee, Economic and Social Council, Trade and Development Board, Industrial Development Board, governing body of the World Trade Organization, etc.).

25. The production and use of disaggregated statistics by sex should be promoted as a fundamental tool for monitoring the gender division of the labour market and the participation of women in high-level management positions, including economic decision-making, showing the advantages and the costs of the exclusion of women. With regard to the United Nations system, a special data section on women managers should be part of the 1998 synthesis report and of the report on the status of the world's women. The section could serve as a special monitoring mechanism of how gender-balance goals are being achieved.

26. [Issues such as the impact of structural adjustment and trade liberalization on women should be further examined and could be taken up in the context of the report of the Secretary-General on the effective mobilization and integration of women in development, to be considered by the General Assembly at its fifty-second session.]

27. [Governments and international organizations should apply as soon as possible the 20/20 concept and the agreed target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product of the developed countries for overall official development assistance, as accepted at the World Summit for Social Development and reinforced in the Platform for Action, in a gender-balanced way.]